



Lamoine Board of Selectmen

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MINUTES OF JUNE 12, 2008

Chairman Jo Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:28 PM

Present were: Selectmen Chris Tadema-Wielandt, S. Josephine Cooper, Brett Jones, Richard Fennelly Jr., Administrative Assistant Stu Marckoon, and, individually, job applicants for the Transfer Station Attendant and Animal Control Officer positions.

Chris moved to enter executive session pursuant to 1MRSA §405(6)(a) to conduct interviews with job applicants. Jo 2nd. **Vote in favor was 3-0 (Fennelly had not yet arrived). In at 6:28 PM Out at 7:00 PM**

Regular Meeting

Jo called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 PM

In attendance in addition to the Selectmen and Administrative Assistant were Kathleen Rybarz (School Committee), Michael Jordan (Deputy CEO), Kathleen DeFusco (Asst. Town Clerk), Jane Fowler (Assessor), and Faith Perkins (School Committee)

No changes to the agenda were made or requested.

Minutes of May 29, 2008 – Richard said he had a few changes. Stu noted some changes were handed in prior to the meeting by Chris. Chris moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Richard 2nd. **Vote in favor was 3-0 (Cooper abstained, not present at previous meeting).**

Warrant 25 – Selectmen signed expenditure warrant 25 for \$309,024.95. Stu noted that he moved \$165,000 from the investment management account to the checking account. Chris asked about payment to the World of Flags and Ray Plumbing. Richard asked if one of the World of Flags payments was from the Veterans Memorial Fund. Stu said the first World of Flags payment (\$268.51) was for the Veterans Grave flags, the second (\$1,883.00) was indeed from the Veterans Memorial Fund for flagpoles. He said the Ray Plumbing payment was for the transfer station porta-potty.

Cash & Budget Report – Chris asked what the salt/sand shed maintenance line was. Stu said that was for electricity and would be changed in the coming fiscal year. Richard asked about animal control revenues and expenses. Stu noted the fund was in the red.

Checking Account Reconciliation – Selectmen signed the statement expressing satisfaction with the review of the checking account reconciliation of May 31, 2008.

School Budget – Jo noted there will be a public meeting on June 16th in regard to the school budget, and a Budget Committee Meeting on June 19th. Faith Perkins said there will be a special school board meeting to pass the budget before presenting it to the Selectmen to schedule the town meeting. Jo said the Selectmen would sign the town meeting warrant on June 26th for an open town meeting on July 9, 2008 and the validation referendum on July 15, 2008.

Ms. Perkins noted the school board met on Friday, June 6, 2008, and there was a lot of discussion. She said there was a question as to whether the town could consider taking the funds from a reserve account to cover the school budget. She said last year voters agreed to eliminate the balance forward so there would not be a tax hit. She said people were warned the town would be slammed next year, and it ended up being a double slam. She said she's not sure that an appropriation from a reserve account would work.

Jo said there could be an appropriation from fund balance. Richard asked what the school balance forward had been. Ms. Perkins said it had been \$185,000. Richard said he recalled that the strong caution was issued. Jo said this is a good example of how the consolidation issue has led to confusion and is making people anxious.

Jane Fowler asked about the impact of the loss of \$185,000 in balance forward. Brett noted the school budget as presented reflected a 7% expense increase. He said the \$185,000 less in available revenue was due to the prior use of the balance forward, and \$270,000 was the loss of state revenue. Jo said people might want to know the impact on property taxes from each source impacting the school budget. Richard said he thinks the question would be, what the tax increase would be if the \$185,000 balance forward were taken out of the equation. Stu said just figuring in his head, the increase would be about a 25% increase in taxes, due to the budget increase and the state revenue cut.

Richard said he had asked whether this would push the problem a year down the road, and the Superintendent said no. Stu said it would because the town's surplus would not be available the following year. A discussion followed in regard to the surplus level.

Brett said he didn't know how dangerous it would be to bring down the fund balance. A short discussion followed about fund balance levels.

Jo said there needs to be a mutli-pronged approach to the problem. She said it can't be fixed and made to go away without paying for it. She said the solution should try to mitigate some of the pain. She said it sounds like a lot of pretty painful things would happen at the school with only minor savings. Ms. Perkins said the school committee is looking at other options for what the school might look like. She said the vision 5-years out, with consolidation and next year's budget factored in, creates a lot of confusion.

Jo said the town can't make the consolidation bill go away. She said too many things are on the table, and the future is uncertain, so people naturally said "no" to the proposed school budget. Richard said the town has to keep in mind that using surplus to mitigate the problem would be fine if there were not more expenses coming down the road. He said there would be a debt service payment and consolidation costs.

Ms. Perkins said the Alternative Operating System (AOS) plan for consolidation would be submitted to the Department of Education tomorrow. She said some of the Union 92 towns might be doing something different. She said there would not be any cost savings in the first few years of consolidation. She said the potential savings would be in 3-to-4 years. She said those savings might be from administration or teacher reductions.

Richard said there is no magic closet with huge savings stored inside. He said with all the other cuts discussed the other night, the savings was only about 5% and he doesn't know where else to cut. He said the budget won't get smaller. He said what he saw at the referendum vote was that it was too much money and people are at the breaking point with energy costs. A short discussion followed.

Richard said people who were opposed to the school budget want to see an honest and sincere effort at hard cuts. Brett said whatever cuts that could be made will be hard cuts. Richard said a few cuts were reasonable, such as reducing the janitor position down to 1-person from 1.5. He said combining classes could be managed. A discussion on the maximum class size followed.

Jo said if the town is not willing to invest in its school, that would keep people with children away. She said it becomes a Catch-22 situation. Brett said a lot of what happens with the school will be decided for the town by somebody else.

Mrs. Fowler said she put 3-kids through the school and the class sizes have consistently gotten smaller, while families are getting smaller. She said it's ridiculous to say the town will re-populate the school in 5-years. She said she

has grand-children in the South Portland school system, and when the class size reaches 25-to-30, the classroom splits. She said teachers come and go in South Portland.

Michael Jordan said when combining classes is started, a big combined class size is different, and a combined grade class is hard to teach. A short discussion followed.

Jo said the mandates on education today are huge. She said the town could look at this and it could do a crappy job now or do it better. She said there could be a discussion about philosophical differences. She said she could not believe what the requirements are to be employed as a teacher or principal. She said she didn't think any money would be saved. She said it all depends on the numbers. Richard said the state mandates are forced on the towns by the same people who are cutting the funds to pay for them. He said the town is only \$179,000 away from freedom of state decisions. He said the town could tell the state to go away. Ms. Perkins said if the town goes its own way, it loses all the economies achieved by sharing services with other communities. A brief discussion followed.

Richard asked what happens to the AOS plan if a second Union 92 school bails. He asked if that would leave enough students to qualify for an AOS.

Stu noted the July 9th town meeting would be at the fire station. A further discussion of fund balance use followed.

Copier Contract – Stu said the current copier contract is working well. Jo suggested it wouldn't hurt to get more information on the statewide copier contract. Stu said he would send back the inquiry letter.

Abatement Request – Joseph & Joanne St. Pierre – Stu reported he had no response from the St. Pierres. Chris moved to deny the abatement request. Brett 2nd. **Vote in favor was 4-0.** Assessor Jane Fowler said the Board had done the right thing.

Personnel Appointments – Chris moved to appoint the following:

Position	Appointee	Term Expires
Town Clerk	Jennifer Kovacs	6/30/09
Tax Collector	Jennifer Kovacs	6/30/09
Excise Tax Collector	Jennifer Kovacs	6/30/09
Deputy Treasurer	Jennifer Kovacs	6/30/09

Assistant Town Clerk	Kathleen DeFusco	6/30/09
Assistant Tax Collector	Kathleen DeFusco	6/30/09
Assistant Treasurer	Kathleen DeFusco	6/30/09
Assistant Excise Tax Collector	Kathleen DeFusco	6/30/09
Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Treasurer	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Deputy Town Clerk	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Deputy Tax Collector	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
General Assistance Administrator	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Addressing Coordinator	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Deputy Excise Tax Collector	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Deputy Registrar of Voters	Kathleen DeFusco	6/30/09
Deputy Registrar of Voters	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Emergency Management Director	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Deputy Fire Warden	Stuart Marckoon	6/30/09
Deputy Fire Warden	James Hunnewell	6/30/09
Fire Chief	George Smith	6/30/09
Harbor Master	David Herrick	6/30/09
Board of Appeals – Alternate Member	Merle Bragdon	6/30/11
Board of Appeals	John Wuorinen	6/30/11
Board of Appeals	Hancock “Griff” Fenton	6/30/11
Budget Committee	Robin Veysey	6/30/11
Conservation Commission	Fred Stocking	6/30/11
Conservation Commission Associate	Joan Strout	6/30/11
Parks Commissioner	Kerry Galeaz	6/30/11
Parks Commissioner-Alternate	Richard Brey	6/30/11

Jo 2nd. **Vote in favor was 4-0.** Selectmen signed the appointment papers. Michael Jordan asked where he and Code Enforcement Officer Dennis Ford stood in regard to reappointment. Stu said that would come at the next meeting after the Selectmen complete the performance reviews.

Contracts – Stu reported Chris suggested a number of changes to the Administrative Assistant’s contract, and he put most of those into the latest draft version. Chris said he would like to see one standard contract for all positions, and have the job description become a separate part of the contract.

There were discussions on the following items:

- Including Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a holiday
- Fee Compensation

- Vacation Compensation
- The Union River Valley Teacher's Association contract sick leave policy
- Adding subject to withholding tax on the fee compensation line

Selectmen instructed Stu to submit the draft contracts for the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk to those appointees.

Resignation of Deputy Harbor Master - Selectmen signed a letter accepting, with regret, the resignation of Brian Corrigan as Deputy Harbor Master. Stu noted that Mr. Corrigan has taken a job in North Carolina. An advertisement will be posted for a replacement.

Right to Know Law Training – Stu said he would like to do Right-to-Know law training at the next regular meeting. Chris said he expects he would receive the training at an Elected Officials Workshop next week and would bring home the materials.

July 4, 2008 – Transfer Station – The Board said it would ask whoever becomes the transfer station attendant if they intend to work on Friday July 4th, but would prefer that it be open on that day as usual.

Town Office – Stu noted that the town office would normally be open on July 5th as it is the first Saturday of the month. Selectmen asked Stu to run it by Town Clerk Jennifer Kovacs (who is scheduled to work that Saturday), as to whether she would prefer to be open on the 5th or reschedule it to the 12th.

Vacation Request – Stu asked if he could take vacation the week of July 7th. Selectmen agreed that would be OK so long as the office is covered for the week. Stu noted that a special town meeting is set for July 9th. Selectmen asked Stu to delegate his responsibilities to work at the town meeting.

Interest Holiday - Chris said this was his idea. He said the projected tax increase will present a genuine hardship, and he thought that if the town could give people an extra 6-months to pay it could be helpful. Stu said a 2-part payment might be difficult to figure. Chris said he wanted to raise the idea. Mrs. Fowler said it's going to be a difficult winter for everyone with fuel increases and health insurance costs. Selectmen agreed to think it over. Stu said he would figure out how to adjust the computer database in-house if needed.

Board of Appeals – Lawyer use request- Stu reported there was a letter and a memo from Griff Fenton in regard to asking the town attorney for an opinion on whether the Board of Appeals has jurisdiction in the appeal of the referendum petition decision. Jo said the Selectmen should allow the Appeals Board to do

that. Richard said he agreed. Brett said he concurred. Jo moved to allow the Board of Appeals to consult with Town Attorney Tony Beardsley in regard to the appeal brought by Robert Sharkey. Chris 2nd. **Vote in favor was 4-0.** Stu reported that he has not yet contacted Mr. Beardsley, despite communications from Mr. Sharkey stating otherwise.

Executive Session – Chris moved to enter executive session pursuant to 1MRSA §405(6)(a) for the purpose of a job performance review with the Administrative Assistant and to discuss earlier interviews with the applicants for the Transfer Station Attendant and Animal Control Officer positions. Jo 2nd. **Vote in favor was 4-0 at 8:37 PM.** Out at 9:20 PM

The Board agreed to meet on Monday, June 16, 2008 at 6:00 PM (later changed to 5:30 PM to accommodate the school budget forum) to re-interview one of the applicants.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst.